

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VIENNA 003672

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/ERA AND EUR/AGS - VIKMANIS-KELLER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/17/2015

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [IZ](#) [KPAL](#) [PREL](#) [AU](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: AUSTRIA ON THE NOVEMBER 21 EU FOREIGN MINISTERS

MEETING (GAERC)

REF: STATE 208899

Classified By: Economic-Political Counselor Gregory E. Phillips. Reaso

ns: 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) EconPolCouns delivered reftel demarche to Andreas Riecken, the Austrian Foreign Ministry's European Correspondent, on November 17 concerning the November 21 meeting of the EU General Affairs and External Relations Committee (GAERC). Riecken had the following substantive comments.

----

Iraq

----

[1](#)2. (C) Riecken said the Austrian Foreign Minister would likely raise an Austrian offer to provide experts in constitutional and federal law to the Iraqis to assist in the development of legislation concerning the country's federal structure. This was an offer the Austrians had made directly to the Iraqis on a national basis. Riecken said Austria would propose an EU-wide effort in this regard.

[1](#)3. (SBU) On debt, Riecken noted that Austria had implemented the decision to forgive 80 percent of Iraq's debt to Austria. This figure amounts to approximately one percent of Austria's GDP.

[1](#)4. (C) Regarding the elections, Riecken thought that the EU would provide financial support to Iraq for the elections, but was unlikely to send monitors.

-----

Middle East Peace Process

-----

[1](#)5. (C) The EU will "work hard" to make the Agreement on Movement and Access work, Riecken said. The EU will contribute resources, and will provide personnel by the end of November. Nationally, Austria will contribute funds, but not personnel.

-----

Ukraine

-----

[1](#)6. (C) Riecken said the GAERC would not discuss Ukraine as such. The agenda item concerns preparations for the December 1 EU-Ukraine summit. Specifically, the GAERC will approve the Action Plan for Ukraine, the first evaluation of which

would occur under the Austrian presidency.

-----

Bosnia

-----

17. (C) Bosnia will arise in the GAERC under a "Western Balkans" agenda item. There will be a longer discussion if the COREPER currently underway is able to reach a decision on guidelines for the negotiation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with Bosnia. If the COREPER is unable to do this, Riecken said, the discussion will be shorter.

-----

Kosovo

-----

18. (C) Riecken said Kosovo was not on the agenda as such. Bosnia will likely dominate the "Western Balkans" agenda item, he said. On the substance of our points, Riecken agreed on the importance of UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari's efforts. Riecken said he understood that Ahtisaari intended to reach some substantive conclusions on Kosovo status by the end of 2006. Riecken said that Austrian plans for a meeting of Balkan Foreign Ministers during the March EU Foreign Ministers meeting in Salzburg came in the context of following up on Thessaloniki, but could help provide impetus to Ahtisaari's efforts.

-----

Syria

-----

19. (C) Syria is not on the agenda, Riecken said. He added that the luncheon discussion will cover Iran, Iraq and the Middle East Peace Process, and Syria could come up in this context.

---

WTO

---

10.. (C) Riecken said the French had insisted on keeping WTO on the agenda as a forum for "informing" EU countries of the status of negotiations in Geneva.

-----

Africa

-----

11. (C) Riecken said the agenda included a discussion on the EU's Africa Strategy. The Commission, Council Secretariat and Presidency had developed ideas for a new basis for the EU's relations with Africa. The GAERC is supposed to make the new strategy ready for the European Council to discuss in December.

VAN VOORST